

# Community Coalition

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Some issues are so broad that everyone needs to participate in finding a solution. An effective strategy for beginning this effort is to create a broad-based coalition that represents many different organizations, individuals and points of view. Sometimes it can seem more efficient to work with a small group of like-minded individuals, but for an issue with such complexity, developing the right solution and gaining widespread support will take a larger group effort. You are much more likely to find new ideas and develop more partnerships if you listen to a variety of people. This kind of challenging group dynamic can be productive and fun when focused toward a shared goal.

*"Communities should consider drunk driving coalitions to motivate, guide, and coordinate community activities. Citizen groups, private industry, and safety organizations should assist governments at all levels."* Recommendation from the National Town Hall Meeting on Drunk Driving in American 2001, conducted by the National Commission Against Drunk Driving <http://www.ncadd.com/townhall.pdf>

## Foundation of a Strong Partnership

Launching this effort will require a lot of time, effort and commitment from a wide range of community members. Everyone involved, however, should find it very rewarding to prevent fatalities and injuries by decreasing the number of alcohol-related crashes in the community. The task at hand will include establishing and promoting a new business. This **Road Crew** toolbox provides communities a basic overview of the steps to be taken to launch an initiative, but there is no substitute for local commitment, leadership and insights to make your program a success. Here is a short checklist of the qualities found in successful project teams:

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Shared Vision</b>              | → Participants are committed to the project objective, regardless of their own self interest.  |
| <b>Complementary Strengths</b>    | → Each person contributes unique perspectives, skills and expertise to the project.  |
| <b>Willingness to Collaborate</b> | → All parties are open-minded and cooperative in their communication style. They are able to accept divergent views and blend them into a unified whole. |
| <b>Respect for Boundaries</b>     | → Each person shows respect for the contributions, limitations and boundaries of others.   |



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## Structure

It might be useful to structure your **Road Crew** coalition into two complementary teams. The core community coalition should be made up of a wide range of representatives, steered by an executive committee, similar to a board of directors. The second, an advisory group, should be made up of target-age bar patrons. Bear in mind that different bars attract different patrons, and try to include “ring leaders” from several bars in the advisory group. They are the ambassadors for “early adopters” in the program. These two groups will need to work in sync to achieve the best results.

### WHAT DO BOARDS DO?

The BoardSource <http://www.boardsource.org/default.asp?ID=1> has a wealth of information that will be valuable as your coalition is getting organized, including two important sections: what you should know about boards and what you should know about nonprofits. They describe a board’s major responsibilities as:

- ▶ **Legal and fiduciary.** The board is responsible for ensuring that the organization meets legal requirements and that it is operating in accordance with its mission and for the purpose for which it was granted tax-exemption.
- ▶ **Oversight.** The board is responsible for ensuring that the organization is well run.
- ▶ **Fund-raising.** As part of their fiduciary responsibility, many board members are actively involved in making sure that the organization has the money it needs.
- ▶ **Representation of constituencies and viewpoints.** Often, members are chosen so that they can bring to the board the experience or perspective of a particular group or segment of the organization's constituency.

## Key Partners

Choosing the right people for the project team is an important decision. You need to get organized quickly and be functioning with a spirit of collaboration right from the start. When thinking about who is best suited to collaborate in this effort, consider individuals’ talents, interests, special abilities, contacts, resources, availability and the overall contribution they can make to the team. People who have found themselves in the position of not being able to drive safely after excessive drinking must be included. Major participants may include your state Department of Transportation local field representatives, law enforcement, community government, state tavern league or similar industry group, colleges and universities, and alcoholic beverage wholesalers.



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You'll need representatives from many organizations to be active participants in the planning and implementation of any communitywide plan. They each have a vital role in making your program a success. Here is a list of many of the key partners, their roles and responsibilities.

| PARTNER  | ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES   |
|--|---|
| Local government, particularly transportation committee members    | City or county government may provide support to the project with their expertise in areas such as finance, legal, and administration.  |
| The serving industry, such as bar owners and Tavern League members | Owners and managers, bartenders and wait staff are important in raising awareness, setting the tone, influencing customers and providing incentives. Tavern league support adds credibility to the program when you are selling it to bar owners. Potential riders say they would be most likely to use a service that was sponsored by their favorite bar and includes their peer group.   |
| Alcohol beverage wholesalers                                       | Experience has shown alcohol beverage wholesalers to be very supportive of these efforts. They often have community relations budgets to help with publicity and promotion, and may include information in their server training programs. They also may be able to tap into corporate headquarters for resources.  |
| Public health professionals  | It is expected that public health officials would support programs that improve the health of the community's citizenry. In some cases, however, they have raised objections to ride services because the programs do not address the potentially underlying issue of excessive alcohol consumption. If you can build alliances within the public health community by overcoming this objection, your program will be that much stronger.   |
| Law enforcement  | If law enforcement has good relations with the target and the serving industry, they can be a huge asset. Their cooperation can go a long way when dealing with issues such as parking tickets and enforcement, and their endorsement can contribute to the community's perception that this is a worthy program. If there are difficult past relations between these groups, law enforcement involvement may be a challenge. In any case, law enforcement should know how valuable they are to the project and how this approach can complement their efforts. |



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|   |  |
|---|--|
| 21-to-34-year-old single male bar patrons and their peers | These representatives are your eyes and ears into the mindset of the target group you want to attract as riders. They should be encouraged to give their own opinions without reservation back, run ideas by their friends and help convene focus groups to test ideas. It will be impossible to succeed without a strong presence from this group. They need to buy in and they need to feel that the proposed plan will serve them well. |
| Print and/or broadcast media                              | A media partner can have a big impact on the success of getting the word out. Ad agencies would make good partners for creative work and production.   |
| Business and other community leaders                      | From an employer's perspective, drunk driving can affect the bottom line in many ways. Lost and injured workers, grief-stricken colleagues, potentially increased costs of insurance, and lost work time – an employee's decision to drive while impaired can have far-reaching effects throughout the workplace. It makes good business sense to get involved.  |

In successful projects, a "project champion" comes to the forefront to take a leadership role and rally participants. This may be someone who has been affected by an alcohol-related crash or is focused on this issue for some other reason. Regardless of their motivations, an impassioned leader can stimulate action, while providing a public face and acting as the spokesperson for the planning team. Without a passionate champion, it is difficult to keep the momentum going to make a major project like this one succeed.

## PROJECT CHAMPION CASE STUDY

Who knew that in the tiny Wisconsin communities of Dodgeville and Mineral Point there was a significant problem with drunk driving? Judge William Dyke, that's who. As a Circuit Court judge, he had seen from the bench many tragic cases involving people who not only once, but repeatedly, drove when they had had too much to drink. When he heard about this new approach to drunk driving, he assembled a group of about 30 citizens, and mobilized them to attend an informational meeting to learn more about starting a ride program. Within the first year of operation, the Dodgeville/Point **Road Crew** had given over 2,000 rides, had established a solid foundation of financial and community support and was poised to expand to adjacent communities. With the encouragement of a prominent leader like Judge Dyke, their coalition had a solid foundation right from the start.



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## Action Steps

Worksheets: *Project Commitment*, *Team Roster*

It might be helpful to divide up duties quickly for this first stage of your planning process. You might want to organize committees such as Research (to coordinate with the target market), Transportation, Incentives, Promotions and Fund Development that could work on these topics and report back to the group as a whole. You will also want individuals to take on the duties of leadership, recordkeeping and finance.

Many of the people who have shown interest in your community safety initiative will be ready to make a commitment to the project team. You can use the *Project Commitment* form to check their readiness and obtain personal information. Referring to the roles and responsibilities listed above will help you make sure all important groups are represented. You can complete and distribute the *Team Roster* once everyone is on board.



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## Project Commitment

☐ Yes, I'd like to take an active role in this initiative.

|                  |  |   |
|------------------|--|---|
| Name             |  | Interests                                 |
| Title            |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Research         |
| Organization     |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation   |
| Address          |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Incentives       |
| City, State, Zip |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Promotions       |
| Phone            |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Development |
| Fax              |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership       |
| E-mail           |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Recordkeeping    |
|                  |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance          |

☐ I have someone to recommend for this project.

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Name             |  |
| Title            |  |
| Organization     |  |
| Address          |  |
| City, State, Zip |  |
| Phone            |  |
| Fax              |  |
| E-mail           |  |

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Indicate the best times for attending coalition meetings. Block out with an "X" the times you cannot meet. Circle the best times for you to meet. Those times not marked will be considered available but not preferred.

| Sunday           | Monday               | Tuesday              | Wednesday            | Thursday             | Friday               | Saturday         |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Morning<br>8-11  | Early am<br>7-9      | Early am<br>7-9      | Early am<br>7-9      | Early am<br>7-9      | Early am<br>7-9      | Morning<br>8-11  |
| Midday<br>11-2   | Lunch hour<br>11-1   | Lunch hour<br>11-1   | Lunch hour<br>11-1   | Lunch hour<br>11-1   | Lunch hour<br>11-1   | Midday<br>11-2   |
| Afternoon<br>2-5 | Early evening<br>5-7 | Early evening<br>5-7 | Early evening<br>5-7 | Early evening<br>5-7 | Early evening<br>5-7 | Afternoon<br>2-5 |
| Evening<br>5-8   | Late evening<br>7-9  | Late evening<br>7-9  | Late evening<br>7-9  | Late evening<br>7-9  | Late evening<br>7-9  | Evening<br>5-8   |



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## Team Roster

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Name             |  |
| Title            |  |
| Organization     |  |
| Address          |  |
| City, State, Zip |  |
| Phone            |  |
| Fax              |  |
| E-mail           |  |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Name             |  |
| Title            |  |
| Organization     |  |
| Address          |  |
| City, State, Zip |  |
| Phone            |  |
| Fax              |  |
| E-mail           |  |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Name             |  |
| Title            |  |
| Organization     |  |
| Address          |  |
| City, State, Zip |  |
| Phone            |  |
| Fax              |  |
| E-mail           |  |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Name             |  |
| Title            |  |
| Organization     |  |
| Address          |  |
| City, State, Zip |  |
| Phone            |  |
| Fax              |  |
| E-mail           |  |



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Understanding the 21-to-34-year-old men and women who are frequent bar patrons in your community will be the most important thing you will do in this project. The considerable amount of **Road Crew** research will give you useful insights, but you will need to understand the target in your own community. You then need to include representatives of that group in your planning team. By listening to the voice of the target, you will uncover why they drive after drinking too much, what other choices they might be willing to make, how they end up at bar closing time having had too much to drink and in need of getting home with their vehicle, and ways to communicate with them using appropriate messages and media. You need to understand the target's perceptions of the benefits they receive from driving themselves home, the barriers that might keep them from adopting a different behavior and the benefits you'll need to provide in order to get them to change. Simply put:

Asking the right questions and listening to the views of members of your target market is the single most important step in developing a successful program. What matters are the opinions and perceptions of the target whose behavior you are trying to change; your own perceptions really matter very little. Their perceptions are the reality within which you need to function.

## Recommended Target Market

*"...it is more clear than ever that, overall, young drivers, and especially, young White males account for a large share of the alcohol-crash problem."* – National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Alcohol and Highway Safety 2001: A Review of the State of Knowledge  
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/research/AlcoholHighway/index.htm#Contents>

The group that has the highest incidence of alcohol-related crashes should be your target market, as there is the most opportunity with this group to make a difference. After a thorough review of crash data, the Wisconsin project selected the main target group to be **21-to-34-year-old single men**. Research indicates that this is the most significant target group to target in a viable drunk driving project. While you should focus on this target in designing your ride program, incentives and messages, you will also be selling to anyone who wishes a ride. Marketers aim for their primary target, but will then also sell to anyone in a secondary market.

